18. The Old Woman in the Chest

A poor brother working as a steward for his wealthy, ungenerous brother receives money from a magical stranger to feed his starving family, leading them to slaughter the rich brother's sheep.

To spy on them, the rich brother hides his elderly mother inside a large chest stocked with food and leaves it at the poor brother's house.

The stranger discovers the old woman inside the chest and chokes her to death with a meat bone, returning her body to the wealthy home to be buried.

The stranger repeatedly dug up the old woman's corpse to stage elaborate, terrifying scenarios at the rich brother's estate—first making her look like she was thatching the roof, then threshing oats with a flail, and finally riding an unbroken colt.

Convinced his mother's soul is deeply cursed, the rich brother begs the stranger for help and is told the haunting will only stop if he splits his wealth equally with his poor brother.

The rich man complies, the haunting ends, and the stranger reveals himself to be a spirit from the other life sent to rescue the poor family from poverty.

Themes:

Rebalancing familial wealth and punishing greed.

Restless corpses and trickster supernatural entities.

Divine intervention on behalf of the impoverished.